

Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting May 11, 2026

6:00 p.m.

OPENING

The Board of Trustees of Hellgate Elementary School District #4 met in regular session on Monday, May 11, 2026. The meeting was held in-person. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman, Tom McLaughlin. Trustees participating were: Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook and Scott Rouse. Superintendent Molly Blakely and District Clerk Justine Reese were present for the meeting. District staff participating included Brent Heist (Building 1 Principal), Tiffany Hobbs (Building 3 Principal), Julie McCarthy-McLavery (Building 2 Principal), Brendan Brown (Special Services Director), Haley Patzner (Dean of Students), Adelle Donahue (teacher), Arysa Puckett (AgriCorp), Kristen Cottom (Teacher and HEEA President). Community members in attendance included: Melanie Charlson (MFPE field representative), Elizabeth Kaleva (District Attorney). There were up to 20 total guests/participants in the meeting, in-person.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Arysa Puckett introduced herself to the board as the AgriCorp liason for the district. She has been working with classrooms in the garden to incorporate the garden into the school day. Contractors in the area will be donating time and material to construct a shade structure in the garden. Adelle Donahue thanked her for her time and contribution to the garden.

HEEA

Kristen Cottom provided an update to the Trustees. The HEEA completed their elections for the upcoming school year, Sam Hunton and Kristen Cottom will remain co-Presidents, there was minimal turnover in the other positions.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

There was no recognition at this meeting.

BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

Trustees reviewed the monthly newsletter from OPI.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES-REGULAR MEETING 4-13-2026

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES-SPECIAL MEETING 4-21-2026

A motion was made by Tom Cook to approve the minutes from the April 21, 2026 special meeting with corrections. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item.

Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES-SPECIAL MEETING 4-27-2026

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the minutes from the April 27, 2026 special meeting with corrections. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the item.

Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE WARRANTS-APRIL 2026

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the April 2026 claims. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich

Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF BUDGET REPORTS

Trustees reviewed the budget reports for April 2026.

REVIEW OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the April 2026 Student Activities Report. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFIED STAFF HIRING CONSIDERATION:

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the hiring of the following certified staff for the 26-27 school: Ms. Colleen Kiley, Special Education Bldg 3 (one year only), Ms. Annie McLaverty, 4th Grade (one year only), Ms. Kylie Chimienti, 6th Grade (one year only), Ms. Hailey Camp, First Grade (one year only), Ms. Kathryn Rowley, First Grade (one year only), Ms. Sarah Russell, Kindergarten (one year only), Ms. Grace Hansen, Early Learning Program (one year only). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE HIRING OF MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

A motion was made by Tom Cook to approve the hiring of the members of the Administrative Team for the 2026-2027 school year (complete list available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE HIRING OF MEMBERS OF THE CERTIFIED STAFF

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the hiring of the certified and specialist staff listed for the 2026-2027 school year (see attached Certified and Specialist Rehire List). The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE HIRING OF MEMBERS OF THE CLASSIFIED STAFF

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the hiring of the following members of the classified staff for the 2026-2027 school year (complete list available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CLASSIFIED STAFF HIRING CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Kallie Gatzemeier to approve the hiring of Ms. Hailey Camp, to be an overflow paraprofessional, effective May 4, 2026 for the remainder of the school year. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFIED LONG-TERM MATERNITY LEAVE STAFF HIRING CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the hiring of: Ms. Sarah Russell, long-term maternity substitute, effective April 13, 2026 through June 10, 2026; Ms. Brooke McWilliams, 4th grade long-term maternity leave substitute teacher, effective August 17, 2026 through the duration of the leave request; Ms. Kalei Smith, 6th grade long-term maternity leave substitute teacher, effective August 17, 2026 through the duration of the leave request. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was brief discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

ACCEPTANCE OF CLASSIFIED STAFF RETIREMENT

A motion was made by Tom Cook to accept the retirement of Ms. Audrey Falldorf, paraprofessional, effective June 10, 2026; Mr. Randy Ruff, maintenance/custodian, effective June 30, 2026 and Ms. Pam Russ-Crittenden, Food Service employee, effective June 10, 2026 (letters are available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

ACCEPTANCE OF CERTIFIED STAFF RESIGNATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to accept the resignation of Ms. Amber Tempel, Early Learning Program teacher, effective June 10, 2026 and Mr. Robert Lloyd, Industrial Arts teacher, effective June 10, 2026 (letters available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL FOR CONTINUATION OF SERVICES WITH THE MISSOULA COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICE

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to adopt a resolution granting the Missoula County Elections Office authority to conduct Hellgate Elementary school elections for the 2026-2027 school year (resolution and contract available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

SUBSTITUTE HIRING CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the following substitutes for the 2025-2026 school year: Brian Beckman- Custodial Sub, Marie Fazzio, McKenzie Hunt. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF 8TH GRADE GRADUATES FOR 2025-2026:

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the following 8th grade students to graduate on June 9, 2026 (list available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was clarification requested regarding duplicate names on the list-Jamie Courville responded that the list will be reviewed again prior to graduation. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE 26-27 ACADEMIC CALENDAR:

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the 2026-2027 academic calendar (calendar and survey results included in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Tom Cook. There was discussion regarding if the calendar will match Missoula County Public School or the University. The calendar will replicate Missoula County Public School's calendar. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Tom Cook. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Preliminary Trustee election results: Kallie Gatzemeier and Jacquelyn Ryan received the most preliminary votes in the recent school election.

Childcare Center Update: The lease has been sent to the Childcare provider for review.

Montana Masonic Foundation Grant: \$1,500 was received by the district.

MOR4Kids Grant: \$2,500 was received by the district to support the building 2 playground.

Missoula Gives: \$1,470 was donated to the district.

Bridged Health Alliance: Health insurance open enrollment just completed for the new school year

Grand County Search and Rescue donation: Staff members personally donated to the Grand County Search and Rescue group in honor and memory of Amanda Moffett-Frey. Staff members also personally donated a gift card to the family.

University of Montana Western Hall of Fame Inductee: Jamie Courville was recently inducted into the University of Montana Western Hall of Fame.

Update on Building Three roof estimates: Currently waiting for official estimates before proceeding with the roof construction.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no committee reports at the meeting.

PRINCIPALS' REPORTS

Building 1: Brent Heist provided an update to the Trustees regarding end of year excitement and activities. He noted the District Leadership team had an outstanding meeting recently.

Building 2: Julie McCarthy-McLavery provided an update to the Trustees. She noted the building's testing progress. She also thanked the PTA for organizing a great teacher appreciation week.

Building 3: Tiffany Hobbs provided an update to the Trustees regarding end of year activities and mentioned there is a Law Enforcement Parade coming up on 5/28/26.

Building 4: Jamie Courville provided the Trustees with an update and thanked the admin. assistants for all they do to make the building run smoothly.

Special Services: Brendan Brown informed the Trustees that the State Special Olympics took place the previous week and included 22 Hellgate student athletes. They all had new uniforms thanks to a grant from the Unified Champion Schools.

Curriculum: Absent

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next regular meeting of the Board will be June 8, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel

The purpose of the Executive Session was to discuss a personnel matter. Deeming the rights of the individual outweigh the right of the public to know, Board Chair Tom McLaughlin called for an executive session of the board "The next matter to come before the Board for consideration is a personal matter and in this connection it has been determined as follows: (1) that the matter of individual privacy is involved, (2) that such privacy demands protection of the individual for the sake of reputation and otherwise that little, if anything could be gained by publicly disclosing the information to be discussed, & (3) that the demand of individual privacy, in this matter clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure." All Trustees remained for the Executive Session in addition to Superintendent Blakely, District Clerk Justine Reese, Zach Cain, Kristen Cottom, Melanie Charlson, and Elizabeth Kaleva. The meeting was closed at 6:39 p.m.

Executive Session

The Board came out of executive session at 8:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.